

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Ketanji Brown Jackson, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 53, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 133 Ex.]

YEAS—53

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Romney
Blumenthal	Kaine	Rosen
Booker	Kelly	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Lujan	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	

NAYS—47

Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hagerty	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Cramer	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Lummis	Toomey
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Young
Fischer	Paul	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 53, the nays are 47.

The motion is agreed to.

The senior Senator from Vermont.

NOMINATION OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today is a historic day. Today, each Member of the Senate will have the opportunity to cast a vote on the nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to be an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. I say “historic” because throughout our Nation’s history, only 115 people have served on the Supreme Court. Until now, only five of the Supreme Court Justices have been women. Only two of the Justices have been Black. And none has been a Black woman. So history, indeed, and long overdue.

But I am not going to cast my vote in support of Judge Jackson’s confirmation because she is a woman or because she is Black; I will cast that vote because she is eminently qualified to serve in the position to which she has been nominated.

Her nomination shouldn’t just be welcomed; it should be celebrated. It is a major step forward for our democracy. It is further widening the lens to

help make our Nation more inclusive and more representative with each passing generation.

She is one of the most qualified nominees to the Supreme Court that I have ever considered in my 48 years here: a graduate of Harvard and Harvard Law School; a judicial clerk at the district, circuit, and Supreme Court levels; a Federal appellate judge; a Federal district court judge; a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission; an attorney in private practice. And she will be the first ever Justice who has served as a public defender, bringing that much needed perspective to the Court. No one—no one—can argue that Judge Jackson is not objectively qualified to be confirmed.

The manufactured accusations that were thrown at her by some of our committee during our hearings not only fell flat, but they have been refuted and debunked by serious voices across the political spectrum. They hold no water. They serve only to showcase the vitriol and the contempt with which some Members of this body approach their sacred constitutional role of advice and consent.

I said it during the hearings, and I will say it again: It is distressing, it is disheartening, and as the dean of the Senate, it is saddening. Yet I find hope in the fact that Judge Jackson’s confirmation to our highest Court will have the bipartisan support it deserves and it commands. I commend the Republican Senators who have lauded her qualifications and staked their support of her nomination. Judge Jackson has earned the President’s nomination, and she has earned confirmation from the Senate.

Each and every day, millions of American families are living their lives, and how they live those lives—from the salaries they make to the education their children receive and scores of issues in between—is directly impacted by the decisions made at the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court—in fact, all of our courts can’t be ivory towers, accessible only to and bending to the will of a select few in our society. They have to be accountable to all—all—all Americans. To do so, they must reflect the diversity of our Nation, the diversity that is at the foundation of our democracy—diversity of gender, of race, of creed, of education and history—but also diversity of thought and life experiences. Judge Jackson brings that and more to the Bench.

Mr. President, I am proud to be the President pro tempore of the Senate, and I was proud to chair the Senate Judiciary Committee in the past. In that regard, I voted for the first woman to ever serve on the Supreme Court. I voted for the first Latina to serve on the Supreme Court. I voted on thousands of judicial nominations, nominees of both Republican and Democratic Presidents. I voted for nominations to the Supreme Court who were put forward by Republican Presidents.

I have long lamented the increasing political gamesmanship that has infected our current confirmation process, and many times on this floor, I have warned about the dire consequences for our courts and for our democracy of converting our confirmation process into a zero-sum game where one party wins and one party loses. But to change that gamesmanship requires that we have some adults in the room, that we all come here to the floor of the U.S. Senate not to score a headline or a trending tweet but simply to do our jobs. There are only 100 of us to represent this whole country. So who is going to do that today, simply do their job?

I have taken a clear look at Judge Jackson’s record. I heard her testimony 2 weeks ago. I met with her. I read opinions that she has written. I spent hours listening to her. I saw her intellect, her humility, and her temperament on full display.

Mr. President, she is the Justice we need now. For America today, for the generations to come, for our children and our grandchildren, for all of us, I will cast my vote to confirm Judge Jackson, and I will do it proudly.

I hope the Senate can rise to this moment. I hope it can be the deliberative body the Founders envisioned when they conceived of this great experiment. Our independent judiciary—in fact, our democracy—demands it of us.

Mr. President, history will remember the votes cast here today. I will proudly vote aye.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. WARNOCK. Mr. President, I rise today to express my joy in voting to confirm Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court.

What a great day it is for the United States of America, for our system of government and the grand march toward the fulfillment of the sacred covenant we have with one another as an American people—“e pluribus unum”: out of many, one.

Ketanji Brown Jackson’s improbable journey to the Nation’s highest Court is a reflection of our own journey, through fits and starts, toward the Nation’s highest ideals. She embodies the arc of our history. The very fine product of public schools, both her parents attended segregated primary schools before graduating from historically Black colleges and universities.

She is a two-time graduate of Harvard; a former clerk to Supreme Court Justice Breyer, to whom the Nation owes enormous thanks for his decades of public service; a former Federal public defender who would be the first of her kind to serve on the Supreme Court; a jurist who has gone before the Senate on three separate occasions and each time has garnered strong bipartisan support; a judge who has heard cases both in the U.S. district court and our Federal court of appeals; a judge who has the strong endorsement

of critical stakeholders from across our justice system. From the American Bar Association to those who advocate for civil rights, to organizations representing our Nation's brave law enforcement officers, all of them respect Ketanji Brown Jackson.

She is a wife and a working mom. She is America at its best. That, I believe in my heart after meeting with her in my office, talking to folks whom I trust who know her, and hearing her testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Under intense questioning before the committee—much of it appropriate and necessary; some of it outrageous and beyond the pale—she demonstrated her legal acumen, sharp intellect, and the kind of temperament we need on the Bench, especially at a time like this. If there were any doubts about her character, she more than proved her poise, her skill, composure, and the depth of her patriotism through the process—amazing grace under pressure.

As a voice for Georgians in the Senate, I have said from the beginning that people in my State want someone on the Court who is fair, eminently qualified, and has a record of protecting the constitutional rights and freedoms of Georgians and Americans. That is why my office has received thousands of emails and phone calls from Georgians in every corner of our State voicing their support for Judge Jackson's confirmation.

After hearing from Georgians and thoroughly evaluating her nomination, I am ecstatic to say that Judge Jackson is an excellent jurist who has the temperament and discernment to sit on our Nation's highest Court.

The people of Georgia made this appointment possible by making history last year. So in addition to thanking Georgia for this moment, I want to acknowledge that the historic nature of her appointment isn't lost on me. Like my brother Senator BOOKER, I know what it has taken for Judge Jackson to get to this moment, and nobody is going to steal my joy.

Yes, I am a Senator; I am a pastor, but beyond all of that, I am the father of a young Black girl. I know how much it means for Judge Jackson to have navigated the double jeopardy of racism and sexism to now stand in the glory of this moment in all of her excellence. For my 5-year-old daughter and for so many young women in our country—but, really, if we are thinking about it right, for all of us—seeing Judge Jackson ascend to the Supreme Court reflects the promise of progress on which our democracy rests.

So what a great day it is in America. Today, the word of justice and equal protection under the law becomes flesh and lives among us in new ways. Today, at the highest levels of our government, the administration of our Constitution looks a little bit more like what it says. And it fills me with great pride for our country, how far we have come and what we can achieve together.

Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson is beyond qualified, and I am beyond thrilled to speak for Georgia in voting to confirm her to the U.S. Supreme Court.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3609

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, while we all gather to acknowledge this historic day and prepare to vote to—in my case, at least—confirm Judge Jackson, I rise to bring up another issue. I rise today to urge my colleagues to pass into law commonsense legislation to bring down oil and gas costs for Americans.

As many of my colleagues have discussed on this floor, Americans across the country, including in my State of New Hampshire, are facing higher costs from the grocery store to the gas pump. As we work together to build a stronger, more resilient economy that strengthens our supply chains and invests in American manufacturing, we must also bring relief to American families right now, an issue that has become even more urgent in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has sent gas prices soaring.

As we continue to counter Putin's aggression and inflationary challenges facing our economy, we have an obligation to work together to bring down costs.

That is why I am working to hold Big Oil accountable for profiting off of the pain that Americans are experiencing at the pump. That is why I pushed the administration to release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, an action I was glad to see the administration take, again, just last week. As we look at all options to bring down costs, one clear way to provide immediate relief is by suspending the gas tax for the remainder of this year.

Earlier this year, my colleagues and I introduced a bill to do exactly that. The Gas Prices Relief Act will temporarily suspend the Federal gas tax through the end of the year, helping bring economic relief to families.

As in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 3609; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Reserving my right to object, let me begin by saying my friends and colleagues across the aisle are right about one thing: Gas prices are incredibly higher right now in this country.

The effort to blame this on what has happened in Ukraine, however, overlooks the real cause of the phenomenal rise in gas prices that we have seen for a year before Putin even invaded. Definitely, the invasion did increase pres-

sure on gas prices, but the problem is that this administration's policies have dramatically reduced the supply in the United States and Americans across this country know how supply and demand impacts price.

The gas tax holiday that is now being proposed is not a solution; it is a political gimmick that would not stop skyrocketing gas prices or inflation. In fact, Larry Summers said in a Wall Street Journal podcast:

I think a gas tax idea is saved only by its triviality from being one of the worst public policy ideas of the decade. It will have little effect over any reasonable horizon on gas prices. It will be counterproductive from an environmental point of view. It is the ultimate policy gimmick.

Rather than accept responsibility for 14 months of reckless spending or the more than 40-percent increase in gas prices that had already occurred before the Russian invasion, Democrats want to blame higher gas prices on the Russian invasion or corporate greed. They also want to ignore the consequences of their relentless attacks on the American oil and gas industry, the administration's overly bureaucratic permit and regulatory process for domestic energy production, and the misguided policy decisions like canceling the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The solution to rising gas prices is not a tax holiday, which would offer little relief but threaten infrastructure investments and worsen our national debt situation; nor is the solution a tax on American companies who increase their production of oil and gas to try to help us become more energy independent; nor is it stimulus checks, which have the potential, as the past ones have, to increase gas prices even further and push inflation even higher; nor is it to encourage other hostile regimes to produce more oil.

The only lasting solution to our current problems is to bolster American oil and gas production to replace not only Russian imports but to facilitate exports to support our allies and end their dependence on Russia. Indeed, I, along with a number of my Republican colleagues, have sponsored proposals to enhance energy independence and undo many of President Biden's misguided energy policies.

Republicans believe we can and should be doing more to unleash America's domestic energy potential, reduce reliance on volatile foreign actors like Russia, and deliver cost savings to middle-class families across the country. Hard-working American families need real relief, not political gimmicks, and that is why I oppose this gas tax holiday.

I urge my Democratic colleagues to abandon the reckless spending-and-tax policies that have already failed but which seem to be contemplated in the President's newly reintroduced budget and support proposals that will actually lower prices for everyday Americans. For those reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. HASSAN. Before I wrap up, I just want to point out what you just heard—what the American people have just heard—is talking points straight out of Big Oil's playbook.

A gas tax holiday is a commonsense solution that would provide immediate relief for Granite Staters and Americans all over the country. Big Oil holds thousands of unused permits at their fingertips that they could use right now to increase supply. Instead, what is happening is Big Oil is padding its pockets at the expense of Americans.

Let's be clear. This would not take a dime out of the highway trust fund because this bill instructs Treasury to replenish the trust fund, something it has done half a dozen times in about the last decade. This is something that has bipartisan support across the country—Democratic and Republican Governors, Democratic and Republican legislators are moving to suspend their gas taxes. This is something we could do right now to help American families balance their budgets and make ends meet.

While I am disappointed to see my colleague block this critical legislation, I will keep working to bring down costs for American families and get this bill passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Jackson nomination expire at 1:45 p.m. today.

For the information of the Senate, there will be a rollcall vote at 1:45 p.m. today on confirmation of the nomination of Ketanji Brown Jackson to be an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Senators are encouraged to be seated prior to the start of the vote and are encouraged to cast their vote from their desks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Louisiana.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about saving school choice or, perhaps, parental choice.

Some students learn differently than others do. I am the parent of a child with dyslexia. I can tell you that any such parent knows one-size-fits-all education does not work.

Parents and students should have the ability to choose the learning environment that is best for that child, and I think the parent can make the choice better than the school board and certainly better than bureaucrats in the Department of Education here in Washington, DC.

The charter school program was created by Congress for that exact purpose: To ensure that parents could choose what is best for their child. Power to the parent. Giving parents the power is crucial to allowing every student to succeed.

Unfortunately, there are groups working to undermine the power the

parent should have to choose their child's school.

The U.S. Department of Education has decided to disregard what is in the best interest of the student with a new proposed rule that adds new requirements for applicants completely unrelated to student outcomes. Applicants would have to demonstrate an unmet need for a charter school, provide evidence of overenrollment at existing public schools in order to establish a charter school.

It seems as if the Department of Education is putting up arbitrary barriers to opening a charter school simply out of prejudice. They don't want the parent to have the power.

Our country's charter schools are under threat from the far left and from teachers unions who seek to shut them down because charter school staffs are difficult to unionize.

Now, these unions know it is much harder to spread their influence in charter schools; and in some cases, it is, frankly, impossible for a charter school to unionize. And the giant unions see this as a simple problem. They know the more charter schools there are, the less revenue they get. So their solution is equally as simple, take power away from parents with layers of new bureaucracy and government regulation. We should not let that happen.

And let's just put this in perspective. Since the pandemic began, it has been public charter schools that have seen a substantial increase in demand. They opened up sooner, and they stayed open in larger numbers than traditional public schools. And we know that open schools are better for children. Parents should have the power to send their child to a school where they feel like they, the parent, have a voice, and where they know their child is more likely to succeed.

Now, let's be clear who this rule is written for—not for the parent and not for the child. It is not written to help the student. It is written to help unions exercise more control over a student's life. This rule makes no mention of how many of these new restrictions improve student achievement or actually help students. And at a time when students are falling behind in record numbers, we need new and innovative approaches to our education system, not just hand the keys over to a special interest group. The truth is, these rules give less choice to families, will hold students back, and do more harm than good.

Now, the charter school program has enjoyed bipartisan support for nearly 30 years. Any substantial change to the program should go through Congress and receive thoughtful consideration. And parent choice for the school their child attends should not be gutted by an informal committee of union employees and education department officials.

Those of us who care about the student, those of us who see the role of

charter schools, we have one message to Secretary of Education Cardona: Back off of our charter schools.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT J. WRIGHT

Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize the career of a beloved and trusted Louisiana journalist, radio host, and friend to all, Robert J. Wright of Shreveport, LA. After 50 years of radio, Robert announced he retires later this month. His last day is Friday, April 29, 1 day after his 70th birthday—a well-earned retirement. Robert is a masterful storyteller and a critical thinker, always finding the other side of a story. He has been a voice of reason and always looking for the truth. He took his first job in radio while attending LSU Shreveport. As he says: "It was indoors, and you didn't have to carry stuff"—about as good a summary of a good job as you could ever ask.

He went on to host morning shows in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Orlando before eventually moving back to Shreveport in 1996. That is when he first teamed up with his long-term cohost, Erin McCarty, to start their morning show that has been a part of Northwest Louisiana's morning commute for over 25 years.

He and McCarty moved their show and has been the "Townsquare" of Shreveport on KEEL ever since. To say that he will be missed is an understatement. Their show has been as much a part of many in Northwest Louisiana's daily routine as a morning cup of coffee. When you interview with Robert, it is clear you are speaking with someone who cares about the issues facing his community, just as much as usual. He has earned the time and trust of his listeners.

So congratulations to Robert J. Wright on an impressive and meaningful career. Robert, I can tell you there are many who are pretty upset about this news, and that is a testament to the positive impact you have had on our community.

Robert, we of Louisiana wish you a happy and well-earned retirement.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator for Iowa.

NOMINATION OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

Mr. GRASSLEY. Soon, we will be voting on Judge Jackson's nomination, and I would like to explain why I am voting against her appointment to the Supreme Court.

Since the White House announced Judge Jackson's nomination, I have emphasized the need for a thorough and fair process. Unfortunately, the majority party weren't concerned about the rigorous examination of her record. The White House and the majority party have shielded important information. We don't have any non-public document from her time at the Sentencing Commission, and the Obama White House held back more than 48,000 pages.

Judge Jackson also gave the White House confidential, nonpublic probation recommendations for some of her